

Washington, DC - Following through on her commitment to improve education and help to keep children out of gangs, Congresswoman Linda Sánchez (CA-39), today announced that she has successfully secured \$165,000 for Lynwood After-School programs. Sánchez got the project included in the Omnibus Appropriations bill (H.R. 4818), which passed the U.S. House of Representatives on November 20th by a vote of 344-to-51, and is expected to be signed into law by President Bush in the near future.

“More and more children are getting involved in gang activity, being left at home alone, or are hanging out with friends with nothing to do after school. Early intervention is key to providing children with options and a more positive outlook to their future,” said Congresswoman Linda Sánchez. “We need to give our young people hope, and after-school programs are vital to providing many at-risk kids with safe and supportive learning environments.”

The federal funds secured by Congresswoman Sánchez will help pay for staff instructional supplies, and computers for 8 after-school sites. The money will also enable Lynwood Library to enhance homework assistance program for middle and high school students.

“After-school programs are a wise investment with huge benefits and rewards down the road. They help our children to learn, which increases high school graduation rates,” Sánchez said. “They help our children to stay out of gangs, which lowers the crime rate. And after-school programs keep our kids safe and off the street, so they are at less risk of getting hurt, abused or exploited.”

A recent report released by the After-school Alliance found that 14.3 million kindergarten through 12th graders nationwide care for themselves after the school day ends. In California, 22 percent of children in that age range take care of themselves. The parents of more than 15 million children nationwide say their children would participate in an after-school program if one were available.

“I could not be more pleased that I was able to obtain critical funding at a time when the Bush Administration is seeking to reduce funding for after-school programs overall. Now is the time to step up our efforts to reduce crime and improve education for our young people. After-school programs target the increasing number of students left alone at the end of the school day. Keeping these children busy and learning is ten times better than having them out on the streets without supervision,” concluded Sánchez.

The City of Lynwood is collaborating with the Lynwood Unified School District (LUSD), Lynwood Chamber of Commerce, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and the Mary Lee Geter Educational Foundation on this project.